

and change it or to go to conference, but a 37th vote that will go nowhere. And everybody who knows that to be the case is on the floor this week. How sad.

RETURN THE POWER BACK TO THE PEOPLE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. RADEL) for 5 minutes.

Mr. RADEL. Mr. Speaker, in this great country of ours, since our founding, we've always had a distrust of government. And, quite honestly, I think that's a healthy thing, most especially today as we learn about what both the Department of Justice and IRS have done.

What we are learning is that this is a threat to your First Amendment: freedom of speech. And let there be no question the order of importance. It is your very first in your Bill of Rights: freedom of speech.

I believe that these rights are so sacred, so precious that I'm introducing the Free Flow of Information Act to protect journalists from the prying eyes of this Federal Government. It is my hope that Republicans and Democrats alike will support this just like then-Senator Obama did in 2007.

A select few in these agencies represent the worst when it comes to a heavy-handed government working to shut down your basic right to speak out as an individual or report the news as an organization. Now is the time that we stand up and say, Our society is not about I, the Federal Government; it is about we, the people. And to quote my generation's music from Public Enemy to Rage Against the Machine: "We gotta fight the powers that be; we gotta take the power back."

In other words, we need to stand up and say that we see the abuse from a few in Washington and we must return the power back to the people. After all, Washington works for you. Not a party. Not an ideology. Your government—elected and unelected—works for you, not against you.

But now we clearly see that both the IRS and the Department of Justice are working against you, working to stifle, to shut down your God-given right of freedom of speech, that freedom often carried out by the press.

In the United States, we are so unique and so powerful because we really share a common belief of some pretty simple things. You should be able to speak your mind. Again, it's called "freedom of speech." And journalists should be able to do their job and do so without the fear of a heavy-handed tyrannical government threatening or stifling them. It's called "freedom of the press."

But now we see an entire culture of government acting on their own behalf, not even beholden to an administration, party, or even a belief. These are rogue agencies that we are talking about, unelected, unchecked, without

boundaries, without ethics, and without a shred of respect for the Constitution or you. These individuals are some people on some floor of some building named after some dude that you've never even heard of messing with your life.

□ 1010

And if you don't think that wiretaps or IRS audits are going to hit you, think again. Two groups from my home in southwest Florida were hit so hard by the IRS that they quit. They shut down their groups. That was it; enough is enough. This is the clearest example of how the government is coming after you to strip away your most basic rights. These groups were made up of hardworking Americans just like you. Their goal: to teach people about the Constitution. Think about that for a second. They wanted to teach people about the very document that tells you you have the right to say what you want. They're now gone.

And let's look at the Department of Justice wiretapping, seizing and prying into the lives of journalists. I worked as a journalist for almost 20 years, living with what I thought our government also believed in—freedom of the press. The freedom to investigate, share, and speak out on injustice.

And from journalists to partisan pundits, Rachel Maddow to Bill O'Reilly, they're coming for you next. Sean Hannity to Chris Hayes, you'll be tapped next as you try to shed light on truth, on injustice, or just try and get some answers.

Where does all of this end?

Well, this is where the so-called far left and far right need to embrace each other. Whether you are a Tea Partier or part of the Occupy movement, this is about you. Whether you are an evangelical Christian wanting to share the word of God or an atheist simply asking for a more secular society, this is about you. This is about you—your freedom of speech, your ability to express what you believe in. This is about you.

Washington insiders should not be dictating your life. The more it's about them, it's not about you. The more government grows unchecked and unbalanced and out of control, the more it's about them and not you.

I believe in you. Stand with me and let's take the power back and return this government to we the people. I promise to stand with you.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to direct their remarks to the Chair.

PROTECT BANGLADESHI FACTORY WORKERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, little more than 100 years ago, a New York State assemblyman

was an eyewitness to one of our Nation's worst industrial tragedies—the Triangle Shirtwaist factory fire. He recounted how he saw girl after girl appear in the reddened windows, pause for a terrified moment, and then leap to the pavement below, to land as a mangled, bloody pulp. He said it went on for what seemed like a ghastly eternity, and described how the firemen's life nets were torn by the impact of falling bodies.

This inferno at a sweatshop garment factory in New York City employed mostly poor, immigrant women. One hundred forty-six workers died that day because it lacked proper stairways, fire escapes, and managers had locked all of the exits. This tragedy shook our Nation and led to lifesaving workplace safety reforms.

A century later, I recently met a young Bangladeshi garment worker named Sumi. She, too, jumped from a window of the Tazreen garment factory. She survived, but 12 of her co-workers who jumped with her did not. More than 100 others who never had the opportunity to jump were found inside of the factory dead. This haunting tragedy has many parallels to the Triangle fire: exit doors were locked; fire extinguishers were not working; fire codes went unenforced.

We don't tolerate those workplace conditions in the United States anymore, but those are deadly conditions that are tolerated in other countries that make the clothing that we wear. These tragedies have moved from New York to Bangladesh, driven by the business models and global supply chains of the world's leading retailers and clothing brands. But now Bangladesh has had what might be its own Triangle Shirtwaist fire.

On April 24, more than 1,100 people died as Rana Plaza and its garment factories collapsed. Some 2,000 more were injured, and rescuers are still pulling bodies out 3 weeks later. There have been an additional 40 fires, explosions, and other incidents between the Tazreen fire and the Rana Plaza tragedies. It's simply a matter of time before there is another one.

These incidents shocked people around the globe and laid bare the need for bold action. The lives of 4 million workers in these factories are counting on bold action. But not everyone has been shocked. Major American retailers and clothing brands have refused to change the way they conduct business in Bangladesh, the second largest garment producer in the world after China. They are hoping instead that the heightened attention will pass without having to change their business model. That business model pits sweatshop against sweatshop, country against country, in a race to the bottom to rake in billions of dollars in profits while paying as little as 22 cents per shirt.

In Bangladesh, American and international companies flourish in this system, companies we all know like

Walmart, the Gap, JCPenney, and The Children's Place, just to name a few. They refuse to accept responsibility.

So what can be done to improve the Bangladeshi factory safety? Certainly there are things local government can do: address corruption that allows unsafe, dangerous structures; enforce safety codes; defend the right of workers to form unions and to have workers be able to refuse unsafe work.

The Bangladeshi Government is scrambling to implement limited reforms, hoping to keep the industry that is critical to its economy, but only the retailers and brands can put a floor under this race to the bottom. The economic power rests with them. That is why the announcement this week by major European companies and one American company that they have signed a binding and enforceable fire and building safety agreement for Bangladesh factories is so significant.

H&M, Zara, Primark, and C&A are to be applauded for their unprecedented and bold steps. They have been joined by only one American company, Phillips-Van Heusen, which has Calvin Klein and Tommy Hilfiger among its brands, and one major German retailer. But now El Corte Ingles, Marks & Spencer, Mango, and Benetton have also agreed to sign this enforceable agreement.

The agreement provides for independent safety inspections with public reports, mandatory repairs and renovations, money to fund the necessary safety upgrades, the right of workers to refuse unsafe work, and the vital role of workers and unions. This agreement is truly unprecedented.

But where are the other American companies? Where are the American retailers? Where are the American clothing brands? Where is Walmart? Where is JCPenney? Where is the Gap? Where is The Children's Place? Their silence in the face of this tragedy is inexcusable. They should sign the binding safety agreement to protect Bangladeshi workers. They should sign it now.

Experts estimate safety improvements under this plan would cost about a dime a garment. A dime for the life of these women.

I urge all Americans to join in demanding that the American retailers and fashion brands stop selling their bloodstained labels and sign the enforceable agreement to protect these Bangladeshi women.

AMNESTY BILL HARMS VULNERABLE WORKERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HOLDING). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BROOKS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BROOKS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, the President and Senate Gang of Eight amnesty bill is not only bad for America, it is a disaster for American workers who are pitted against millions of illegal aliens in the competition for scarce jobs.

On April 24, 2013, Dr. Frank Morris, former executive director of the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation and now leader for the African American Leadership Foundation, stated, "The Senate Gang of Eight's immigration bill is not only impractical, but immoral. Increasing immigration levels through amnesty and new visa programs, particularly at the low-skilled level, will flood the labor market with millions more people, leading to higher unemployment, more poverty, and a lower standard of living for many in the Black community."

Dr. Morris is right. Amnesty undermines millions of African-American workers' incomes and job searches by flooding the American market with cheap labor.

In an April 23 news release, the African American Leadership Foundation stated, "Blacks have an unemployment rate nearly twice that of the national average. The Senate's immigration plan to drastically increase the immigrant workforce will continue to keep that number high."

Dr. Morris emphasized that illegal aliens have huge advantages over American job seekers. "Immigrants are the preferred employees because they are more vulnerable, you can cut them out of overtime, you can cut them out of safety measures, you can cut them out of anything and they have no recourse."

Charles Butler, also of the African American Leadership Foundation, added that the amnesty bill would "provide green cards and residency benefits to illegal aliens when many Americans are hurting the most. What makes sense is for America's jobs to be reserved for people who are legally entitled to compete for them."

In 2007, T. Willard Fair, president of the Urban League of Greater Miami emphasized that, "Amnesty for illegal workers is not just a slap in the face to Black Americans. It's an economic disaster."

"I see illegal immigration and the adverse impact that it has on the political empowerment of African Americans and the impact it has on the job market."

□ 1020

How bad does illegal immigration hurt American workers?

Harvard Professor George Borjas found in a study released in April 2013, and I quote, "Illegal immigration reduces the wage of native workers by an estimated \$99 to \$118 billion a year, and generates a gain for businesses and other users of immigrants of \$107 to \$128 billion."

Who is hurt the most by illegal aliens? American workers who lose \$99 to \$118 billion in badly-needed income.

Who is helped the most by illegal aliens? Employers who pad their profits to the tune of \$107 to \$128 billion when they hire illegal aliens over Americans. Dr. Borjas adds that "immigration has its largest negative im-

pact on the wage of native workers who lack a high school diploma, a group that makes up a modest . . . share of the workforce. These workers are among the poorest Americans."

Who do American workers compete against for jobs? Per a 2010 Pew Hispanic Center study, 7.8 million illegal aliens hold jobs in America. That's 7.8 million job opportunities that would be opening up for American workers if the President would enforce Federal immigration laws.

The way to help our blue-collar and low-wage workers is not to flood the market with illegal aliens. The way to help America's blue-collar and low-wage workers is by denying American jobs to illegal aliens, thus forcing blue-collar wages up and helping workers and their families pursue the American Dream.

Mr. Speaker, we must return American jobs to American citizens. The White House and Congress should be fighting for American jobs for American citizens, not jobs for illegal aliens.

Mr. Speaker, I cannot, in good conscience, ratify illegal conduct with my vote, and I hope other elected officials in Washington will represent Americans seeking jobs, not foreigners illegally on American soil.

THE PARTNERSHIPS FOR ACHIEVING STUDENT SUCCESS ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. CHU) for 5 minutes.

Ms. CHU. Last month, Galway Central School District in New York considered outsourcing the roles of their school psychologist and social worker. After all, budgets are tight, and what harm could come from this?

Andrew Huzsar, the district psychologist, and Christine Bornt, the school social worker, had already faced an uphill battle helping their students. Although the district has only 900 children in attendance, Galway is geographically one of the largest school districts in New York State. And as the only school psychologist and social worker, Andrew and Christine struggled to meet the needs of their students, facing more than double the recommended ratio of students to mental health professionals across the district.

An onslaught of letters and testimony soon flooded the Board of Education, as students, parents, and teachers, alike, protested on Andrew and Christine's behalf. The board soon relented to the public outrage, perhaps thanks to a very moving letter of support that Andrew received. This letter was from a young student explaining that he would not be alive today if it had not been for Andrew intervening in his life. This student was not someone Andrew saw regularly. They met only three times the previous school year.

Mental health counseling is a critical component for student success. Just three meetings were enough to save this student's life.